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OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER HOLDER, ANNER N	
			ART UNIT 2621	PAPER NUMBER
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/509,682

Applicant(s)

SATO ET AL.

Examiner

Anner Holder

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10/12/04 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/12/04, 08/22/06, 05/24/07.</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. Figures 1-25D should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claims 19, 20, 23, 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

4. Claims 19 and 23 define a "recording medium having a computer-readable program recorded thereon" thus embodying functional descriptive material. However, the claim does not define a computer-readable medium or memory and is therefore non-statutory (i.e., "When functional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium it becomes structurally and functionally interrelated to the medium and will be statutory in most cases since use of technology permits the function of the descriptive material to be realized" - MPEP 2106).

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The scope of the claimed invention is much broader than simply claiming a "computer-readable medium" and will therefore encompass non-statutory subject matter.

Suggested claim language: "A computer-readable medium [embodying, encoded with, storing, having a stored, having an encoded thereon computer-readable program, etc.] ..."

5. As to claims 20 and 24, Applicant has claimed a "program" embodying functional descriptive material. However, the claim does not define a computer-readable medium or computer-readable memory and is thus non-statutory for that reason (i.e., "When functional descriptive material is recorded on some computer-readable medium it becomes structurally and functionally interrelated to the medium and will be statutory in most cases since use of technology permits the function of the descriptive material to be realized" – MPEP 2106). The scope of the presently claimed invention encompasses products that are not necessarily computer readable, and thus NOT able to impart any functionality of the recited program. The examiner suggests amending the claim(s) to embody the computer-readable program on "computer-readable medium" or equivalent (see suggested claim language above); assuming the specification does NOT define the computer readable medium as a "signal", "carrier wave", or "transmission medium" which are deemed non-statutory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

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7. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Applicant defines in the specification the expression for $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C) = a + 2b$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C)$ is a context model related to a frame/field flag of a macroblock C and a and b are the values of frame/field flags of respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C. However, Applicant has claimed expression $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C) = a + 2ba$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C)$ is a context model related to a frame/field flag of a macroblock C and a and b are the values of frame/field flags of respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C. Thus not enabling one skilled in the art to make and/or use the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

9. Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 15-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Applicant's admitted prior art (Instant Application Background Art; Pg. 1-8; ¶ 0002-0133; Figs. 1-25D).

10. As to claim 1, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches an encoding apparatus for adaptively carrying out field-based or frame-based encoding processing at a macroblock level with

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interlaced scan image information as an input, [Pg 1 ¶ 0007-0022; Pg 6 ¶ 0094; Fig. 1] the encoding processing including lossless encoding processing carried out based on a CABAC scheme, [Pg 2 ¶ 0028; Fig. 1 (6)] the encoding apparatus comprising: lossless encoding means for carrying out the lossless encoding processing using a context model corresponding to a frame/field flag indicating whether the encoding processing at the macroblock level is field-based or frame-based, [Pg 1 ¶ 0013; Pg 6 ¶ 0098] a context model corresponding to a syntax element for carrying out the frame-based encoding processing, [Pg 3 ¶ 0035-0042] and a context model corresponding to a syntax element for carrying out the field-based encoding processing. [Pg 6 ¶ 0094 and ¶ 0098]

11. As to claim 2, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches context model corresponding to the syntax element for carrying out the field-based encoding processing includes at least one of the context models corresponding to an MB_type for an I picture, an MB_type for a P/B picture, motion vector information, a reference field parameter, and an intra-prediction mode. [Fig. 1; Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 3 ¶ 0042-0045; Pg. 4 ¶ 0048, 0058]

12. As to claim 8, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding, an expression $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 0$ if $e_k(C) < 3$, $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 1$ if $32 < e_k(C)$ or $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 2$ if $3 < e_k(C) < 32$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k)$ is first to third context models corresponding to motion vector information of the macroblock C and $e_k(C)$ is an evaluation function calculated as $e_k(C) = |\text{mvd}_k(A)| + |\text{mvd}_k(B)|$ where $|\text{mvd}_k(A)|$ and $|\text{mvd}_k(B)|$ are motion vector information of respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 4 ¶ 0050-0053]

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13. As to claim 9, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches the macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C belong to the same parity field as that of the macroblock C. [Pg. 6 ¶ 101-102]

14. As to claim 11, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if the macroblock C is subjected to field-based encoding, a context model $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k)$ is used for a second bin and a third bin of the motion vector of the macroblock C, the context model $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k)$ being the same as a frame-based context model $\text{ctx_mvd}(C, k)$. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 4 ¶ 0053]

15. As to claim 12, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C is subjected to the frame-based encoding, an expression $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 0$ if $e_k(C) < 3$, $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 1$ if $32 < e_k(C)$ or $\text{ctx_mvd_field}(C, k) = 2$ if $3 < e_k(C) < 32$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_mvd}(C, k)$ is first to third context models corresponding to motion vector information of the macroblock C and $e_k(C)$ is an evaluation function calculated as $e_k(C) = |\text{mvd}_k(A)| + |\text{mvd}_k(B)|$ where $|\text{mvd}_k(A)|$ and $|\text{mvd}_k(B)|$ are motion vector information of respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 4 ¶ 0050-0053]

16. As to claim 15, Applicant's admitted prior art if a macroblock C is subjected to field-based encoding, a context model corresponding to a second bin and a third bin for a first field and a second field of the macroblock C is the same as a context model $\text{ctx_ref_frame}(C)$ for a macroblock encoded in a frame mode except that a Code Number indicates not a reference frame but a reference field. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 4 ¶ 0053-0057]

17. As to claim 16, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding, a context model $\text{ctx_intra_pred_field}(c)$ for an intra-prediction mode is

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defined in the same manner as a context model `ctx_intra_pred_field(c)` for the macroblock of the frame mode. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 7 ¶ 0102-0108]

18. As to claim 17, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding, a context model `ctx_intra_pred_field(c)` for an intra-prediction mode is defined in the same manner as a context model `ctx_intra_pred (c)` for the macroblock of the frame mode, regardless of whether the macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C are field mode or frame mode. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; Pg. 7 ¶ 0102-0108]

19. As to claim 18, see rejection of claim 1, except this is a claim to a method with the same limitations as claim 1.

20. As to claim 19, see rejection of claim 1, except this is a claim to a recording medium with the same limitations as claim 1.

21. As to claim 20, see rejection of claim 1, except this is a claim to a program with the same limitations as claim 1.

22. As to claim 21, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches a decoding apparatus for decoding image compression information to restore the interlaced scan image information, [Pg. 2 ¶ 0023-0027; Pg 6 ¶ 0094; Fig. 2] comprising: decoding means for decoding the image compression information that is encoded using a context model corresponding to a frame/field flag indicating whether the encoding processing at the macroblock level is field-based or frame-based, [Pg 1 ¶0024; Pg 6 ¶ 0098] a context model corresponding to a syntax element for carrying out the frame-based encoding processing, [Pg 3 ¶ 0035-0039] and a context model corresponding to a syntax element for carrying out the field-based encoding processing. [Pg 6 ¶ 0094]

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23. As to claim 22, see rejection of claim 21, except this is a claim to a method with the same limitations as claim 21.

24. As to claim 23, see rejection of claim 21, except this is a claim to a recording medium with the same limitations as claim 21.

25. As to claim 24, see rejection of claim 21, except this is a claim to a program with the same limitations as claim 21.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

26. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

27. Claims 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art.

28. As to claim 4, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C included in a P picture is subjected to the field-based encoding, an expression $\text{ctx_mb_type_inter_field}(C) = ((A == \text{skip}) ? 0 : 1) + 2 ((B == \text{skip}) ? 0 : 1)$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_mb_type_inter_field}(C)$ is a first context model corresponding to an MB_type of the macroblock C and $(A == \text{skip}) ? 0 : 1$ and $((B == \text{skip}) ? 0 : 1)$ are operators indicating 0 or 1 depending on whether respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C are a Skip mode. [Pg. 3 ¶ 0045 – Pg 4 ¶ 0046; Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg. 6 ¶ 0094). Furthermore, if the value of the frame/ field flag is 1, it indicates that the relevant macroblock is

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to be subjected to field based encoding (Pg. 6 ¶ 0098). Applicant's equation is an obvious variation of known equations to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.]

29. As to claim 5, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C included in a P picture is subjected to the field-based encoding, Code Numbers 0 to 7 corresponding to an MB_type of the macroblock C are binarized into 0, 100, 101, 11000, 11001, 11010, 11011, and 11100, respectively. [Fig. 14A; Pg 6 ¶ 0090]

30. As to claim 6, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C included in a B picture is subjected to the field-based encoding, an expression $\text{ctx_mb_type_inter_field}(C) = ((A == \text{Direct}) ? 0 : 1) + 2 ((B == \text{Direct}) ? 0 : 1)$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_mb_type_inter_field}(C)$ is a first context model corresponding to an MB_type of the macroblock C and $(A == \text{Direct}) ? 0 : 1$ and $((B == \text{Direct}) ? 0 : 1)$ are operators indicating 0 or 1 depending on whether respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C are a Direct mode. [Pg. 3 ¶ 0045 – Pg 4 ¶ 0048; Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg. 6 ¶ 0094). Furthermore, if the value of the frame/ field flag is 1, it indicates that the relevant macroblock is to be subjected to field based encoding (Pg. 6 ¶ 0098). Applicant's equation is an obvious variation of known equations to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.]

31. As to claim 7, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches if a macroblock C included in a B picture is subjected to the field-based encoding, Code Numbers 0 to 13 corresponding to an MB_type of the macroblock C are binarized into 0, 100, 101, 11000, 11001, 11010, 11011,

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11100, 111000, 1110001, 1110010, 1110011, 1110100, 1110101, and 1110110, respectively.

[Fig. 14B; Pg. 6 ¶ 0090]

32. Claims 10, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art in view of Yukitake et al. (Yukitake) US RE 39,281 E.

33. As to claim 10, Applicant's admitted prior art teaches the limitations of claim 8,

Applicant's admitted prior art does not specifically teach if the macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding and the macroblock X (X is A or B) neighboring the macroblock C has been subjected to frame-based encoding, the evaluation function $ek(C)$ is calculated by converting the vertical component of a motion vector corresponding to the macroblock X to the equivalent for field-based encoding based on an expression $mvd_{1_field}(X) = mvd_{1_frame}(X)/2$, where $mvd_{1_frame}(X)$ is the vertical component of the motion vector of the macroblock X.

Yukitake teaches if the macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding and the macroblock X (X is A or B) neighboring the macroblock C has been subjected to frame-based encoding, the evaluation function $ek(C)$ is calculated by converting the vertical component of a motion vector corresponding to the macroblock X to the equivalent for field-based encoding based on an expression $mvd_{1_field}(X) = mvd_{1_frame}(X)/2$, where $mvd_{1_frame}(X)$ is the vertical component of the motion vector of the macroblock X. [Col. 5 Lines 15-27]

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teaching of Yukitake et al. computing vertical component of motion vector with the teachings of Applicant's admitted prior art relating to frame and field conversion. Thus allowing the determination of motion vectors with high precision. [Yukitake - Col. 3 Lines 28-32]

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34. As to claim 13, Applicant's admitted prior art (modified by Yukitake) teaches if the macroblock C is subjected to the frame-based encoding 5 and the macroblock X (X is A or B) neighboring the macroblock C has been subjected to field-based encoding, the evaluation function $ek(c)$ is calculated by converting the horizontal component and the vertical component of a motion vector corresponding to the macroblock X to the equivalents for frame-based encoding based on expressions $mvd_{0_frame}(A) = (mvd_{0_top}(A) + mvd_{0_bottom}(A)) / 2$ and $mvd_{1_frame}(A) = mvd_{1_top}(A) + mvd_{1_bottom}(A)$, where $mvd_{0_field}(X)$ is the horizontal component of the motion vector corresponding to the macroblock X and $mvd_{1_field}(X)$ is the vertical component of the motion vector corresponding to the macroblock X. [Col. 5 Lines 15-27]

35. Claim 3 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art (Instant Application Background Art; Pg. 1-8; ¶ 0002-0133; Figs. 1-25D) in view of Marpe et al. (Marpe), Adaptive Codes for H. 26L. ITU Telecommunications Standardization Sector Study Group Question 6 Video Coding Experts Group (VCEG), VCEG-L13, 9-12 January, 2001.

36. As to claim 3, Applicant admitted prior art teaches a context model related to a frame/field flag of a macroblock C and a and b are the values of frame/field flags of respective macroblocks A and B neighboring the macroblock C. [Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg. 6 ¶ 0094). In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg. 6 ¶ 0094). Furthermore, if the value of the frame/field flag is 1, it indicates that the relevant macroblock is to be subjected to field based encoding (pg. 6 ¶ 0098).]

Applicant's admitted prior art does not specifically teach an expression $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C) = a + 2b$ is satisfied, where $\text{ctx_fifr_flag}(C)$.

Marge teaches an expression for a flag value as $A + 2*B$. [Pg. 2 and 4; Applicant's equation is an obvious variation of known equations to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.]

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Marge with the Applicant's admitted prior art, allowing for computation of the flag value in context model coding.

37. As to claim 14, Applicant's prior art wherein, if a macroblock C is subjected to the field-based encoding, expressions $\text{ctx_ref_field_top}(C) = a_t + 2b_t$ and $\text{ctx_ref_field_bot}(C) = a_b + 2b_b$ are satisfied, where $\text{ctx_ref_field_top}(C)$ is a first context model corresponding to a reference field for a first field of the macroblock C, $\text{ctx_ref_field_bot}(C)$ is a first context model corresponding to a reference field for a second field of the macroblock C, a_t is a parameter related to a first field of a neighboring macroblock A, a_b is a parameter related to a second field of a neighboring macroblock A, b_t is a parameter related to a first field of a neighboring macroblock B, and b_b is a parameter related to a second field of a neighboring macroblock B, where a_t , a_b , b_t , and $b_b = 0$ if the reference field is the immediate previous encoded field or a_t , a_b , b_t , and $b_b = 1$ if the reference field is not the immediate previous encoded field. [Pg. 3 ¶ 0042-0045; Pg. 4 ¶ 0054-0058; Pg. 6 ¶ 0094 and 0098; In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg. 6 ¶ 0094). In MPEG2, if an image signal to be input is of interlaced scan format, field/frame adaptive encoding processing can be carried out at the macroblock level (Pg.

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6 ¶ 0094). Furthermore, if the value of the frame/ field flag is 1, it indicates that the relevant marcoblock is to be subjected to field based encoding (pg. ¶ 0098).]

Applicant's admitted prior art does not specifically teach an expressions $ctx_ref_field_top(C) = a_t + 2b_t$ and $ctx_ref_field_bot(C) = a_b + 2b_b$ are satisfied, where $ctx_ref_field_top(C)$.

Marge teaches an expression for a flag value as $A + 2*B$. [Pg. 2 and 4; Applicant's equation is an obvious variation of known equations to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.]

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at time the invention was made to incorporate the teachings of Marge with the Applicant's admitted prior art, allowing for computation of the flag value in context model coding.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anner Holder whose telephone number is 571-270-1549. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, M-F 8 am - 3 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mehrdad Dastouri can be reached on 571-272-7418. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

ANH 07/06/007

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SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TC 2600